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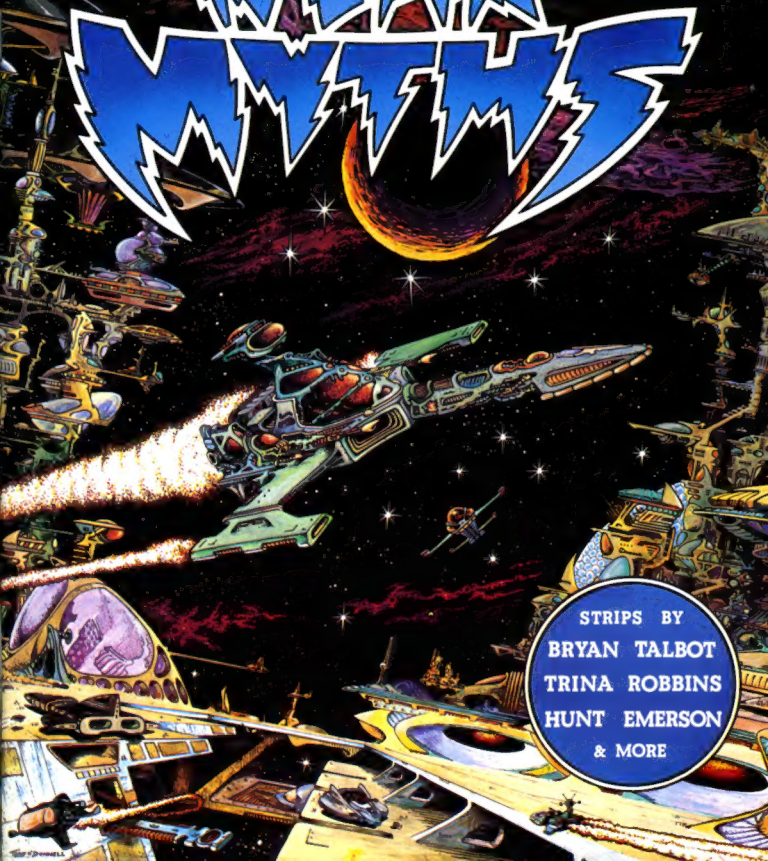
No. 5

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NEAR MYTHS



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& MORE

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Vol.1 No.5



NEAR MYTHS

40 WEST CROSSCAUSEWAY, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

EDITORIAL

Well, the Americans and Russians are at each other's throats again and while we're all hoping they'll settle down and behave themselves, here's something to get your teeth into: the new-format *NEAR MYTHS*.

NEAR MYTHS 4 appeared last September at COMICON '79 in Birmingham and although it was agreed that *NEAR MYTHS* gets better with each issue and was admired by such notables as Frank Brunner, Jim Starlin and Bob Monkhouse, I felt that it wasn't "gripping them" fast enough. To this end I asked *GALAXY* *MEHIA* supreme Rob King if I might edit issue 5 in order to give the direction I thought it needed. He graciously complied and you're holding the result of my efforts. Great difficulties are involved in editing a magazine that's laid-out and published two hundred miles away, but I think that it was worth it and that 5 is the best yet. I hope you think so.

A marked change this issue is the inclusion of an American artist, Trina Robbins, whose works have appeared extensively in many underground comic Statewide and who has always been at the forefront of Feminist involvement in USA comic art. IF *AIN'T ME BABE* (1970) the first alternative comic entirely produced by female artists and dedicated to the women's liberation movement, featured Trina as principal contributor. Her strips have since appeared in *HEAVY METAL*, *SHANORILLA*, *MARVEL*'S *COMIX BOOK*, *BET SATIN*, *TRINA'S WOMEN* and many others. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank her for 'Song of the Shepherds' and her enthusiasm for *NEAR MYTHS*.

Another new writer/artist here is Alan Hunter - renowned in comic fan circles for his many illustrations and strips that have appeared in British fanzines. I first saw Alan's work in the Tolkien society magazine in 1969 and admire his very positive style, to me reminiscent of 40's and 50's American Sci-Fi pulp magazine illustrations.

We also have a two-pager from the quill of Hunt Emerson, driving force behind *STREET COMIX*, organizer of the marvellous Alternative Comic Conventions in '76 and '77 and my favourite cartoonist. Nowadays Hunt

is more involved in the graphics field and his ads and illustrations occur in publications ranging from the Radio Press to the Radio Times.

The remaining content is from the *NEAR MYTHS* stable of artists. Graham Manley, who supplied the original impetus for the comic, has recently had an exhibition of his "Tales from the Edge" artwork and been interviewed on Scottish Radio. Tony O'Donnell has undertaken a post-grad in Comic Art at Edinburgh College of Art. Over the next year he will be working on "Abraxas" - a full colour 100 page Science Fiction epic scripted by Grant T. Morrison. Grant himself never ceases to amaze me. Besides his *NEAR MYTHS* output, he writes novels, performs in a Rock band, writes and draws strips for D.C. Thomson's *STARBLAZER* series and produces "Captain Clyde" for the Govan Press. Rob Norman is currently working on stage designs for 2 local theatre productions. Plans for his next strips include a possible collaboration with John Ranson (Star Run Saga).

The illustrations on this and the contents page are the work of the incredible Mike Bradshaw, a regular contributor to *PEACE NEWS*.

Next issue will see the return of our letter column so we'd really like to hear your opinions on how the comic is developing. Also *NEAR MYTHS* 6 will feature the concluding episodes of "Tales from the Edge" and "The Checkmate Man" and another piece of the Arkwright jigsaw - this time a 14 page instalment entitled "Rat-trap".

NEAR MYTHS is now, and has been for over a year, Britain's only alternative comic - excluding fan magazines and political propaganda. This is a terrible state of affairs, especially after the adult comic boom of the late 70's and considering that a large proportion of our print run is sold abroad. How long will we be lagging behind in comic consciousness? *ALBION AWAKE!*

But I digress. Well, nobody's perfect.

Be seeing you.

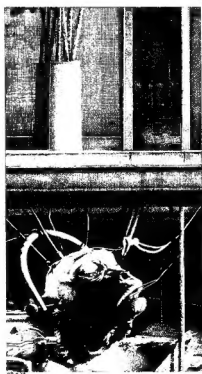
Bryan Talbot,
Brainstorm Studios,
Preston
23 March 1980

As much as I would have liked not to, I have had to increase the cover price of this issue. The increased U.S. price is explained by the fall in the dollar and the smaller

U.K. price increase is just another result of rampant inflation.

We have now taken over our own distribution and this, we hope, will lead to *NEAR MYTHS* becoming more regular. I am trying to publish quarterly from now on.

It remains for me to thank Bryan for editing this issue. Also thank both him and Bunk for producing the spot graphics that the contents now deserve. R. K.



Mike Bradshaw

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NEAR MYTHS

is published as a science fiction & fantasy comic primarily for adults although suitable for older children. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons and/or institutions in this magazine with those living or dead and/or dead persons or institutions is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental.

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Left to right: Bryan Talbot, George Forrest, Rob Norman, Rob King
Graham Manley, John Eunson, Tony O'Donnell, Grant Morrison

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Galaxy Media Logo
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Bryan Talbot
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John Eunson
George Forrest
Bonk
Bryan Talbot
Tony O'Donnell
Galen Song
Rob King



Mike Breidshaw

PART ONE:



IT IS A BRIGHT DAY IN LATE AUTUMN THE SKY IS PALE, COLD BLUE AND THE LEAVES ARE BRITTLE AND BROWN IN THE GUTTER THE HOTEL DOOR OPENS. KARL MARX STEPS OUT BLINKING IN THE LEVEL RAYS OF THE RISING SUN. HE CLUTCHES THE BRIEFCASE UNDER HIS ARM, AND TURNS SLIGHTLY AT A SOUND...



...THERE IS A HISS OF AIR...



...AND A NEAT ROUND, RED HOLE IS TUNNELLED INTO MARX'S SKULL...



HE MAKES NO SOUND AS HE FALLS, AND HIS BRIEFCASE BURSTS OPEN...



THE PAPERS WITHIN CAUGHT BY THE WIND ARE BLOWN LIKE THE LEAVES



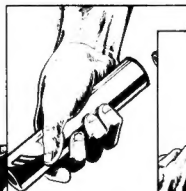
THE SKY IS REFLECTED RED, IN THE SWELLING PUDDLE AROUND MARX'S HEAD...

...THE WIND IS COLD...



CONRAD UNCLIPPED THE SILENCER FROM HIS RIFLE...

THE CHECKMATE MAN



by GRANT T MORRISON
script © 1977
art © 1979

...BROKE THE GUN INTO ITS COMPONENT PARTS AND PUT IT BACK IN HIS PACK...

...THE POLICE WOULD SOON FIND OUT, BUT HE WOULD BE GONE... HE FELT SLIGHTLY SICKENED... BUT THAT TOO WOULD PASS.



...SUCH ECONOMY OF CONSTRUCTION HE THOUGHT AS HE SWUNG THE PACK ONTO HIS SHOULDER'S AND FASTENED IT.



...HE PRESSED THE BUTTON...



...AND THE BUZZING IN HIS EARS BEGAN...

THE DAYS ACCELERATED, BLINDING HIM...

...THE BUZZING WAS EVERYTHING THERE WAS AND HE COULD SEE IT AND TOUCH IT, TASTE IT AND SMELL IT AND IT FLOWED IN HIS VEINS LIKE LIGHT SO THAT HE COULD SEE THROUGH HIS ARMS...

HOW DO YOU FEEL, YALL?

HE WAS IN THE VAN — ON THE COUCH

YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL

YOUR COMPUTER KNOWS MORE ABOUT HOW I FEEL THAN I DO MARCOS

ALRIGHT, YOU ARE WEAK THEN

YEAH.

THE PROBLEM OF CELLULAR DISRUPTION IS ONE WE MUST SOLVE

OH, BY THE WAY...

...WE'RE INSTALLING AN EXPERIMENTAL CIRCUIT THAT WILL ALLOW YOU TO SHIFT LOCATION AS WELL AS TIME.

IT'LL SAVE US DRIVING THE VAN EVERYWHERE

IT'S ONLY TO BE EXPECTED YOU WERE BACK OVER 150 YEARS THAT TIME.

THE WONDERS OF PHYSICS.

I'D LIKE TO GET HOME NOW.

AFTER THE REMAINING TESTS OF COURSE

IT'S NOT AS IF YOU'RE OUR PRISONER, LYALL.

ONE OF THE MEN IN THE FRONT TURNED...

HIS FACE WAS BLANK. THE EYES ARE THE WINDOW TO THE SOUL AND HIS WERE HIDDEN BEHIND DARK GLASSES.

CONRAD KNEW THAT THE DRIVER WOULD LOOK EXACTLY THE SAME...

MARCOS CLICKED HIS TONGUE AS HE SLID A PLASTIC CARD INTO THE COMPUTER...

KEEP IT UP MARCOS AND YOU'LL BECOME ONE YOURSELF.

AH—IF ONLY I MIGHT...

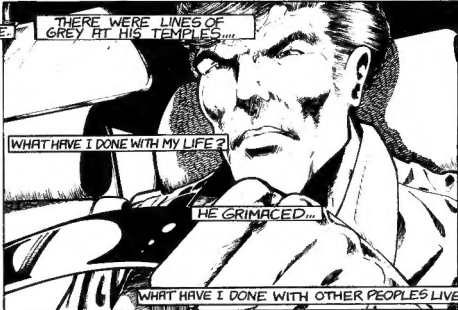
THE ROAR OF AIR THROUGH THE CAR WINDOW WAS A GREAT THING AND THE LIGHTS OF OTHER CARS ON THE INTERSTATE FREEWAY. CONRAD CHECKED HIS MIRROR. OF COURSE THEY WERE FOLLOWING HIM—THAT CAR WITH THE BLACK WINDOWS AND NO NUMBERPLATE. THEY FLAUNTED THEIR POWER OVER HIM.





IN THE MIRROR WAS HIS OWN FACE...

TO KNOW WHO YOU ARE
TO KNOW HOW AND WHY,
HE THOUGHT, IS WHAT
YOU MUST KNOW.



THERE WERE LINES OF
GREY AT HIS TEMPLES...

WHAT HAVE I DONE WITH MY LIFE?

HE GRIMACED...

WHAT HAVE I DONE WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S LIVES?

...THAT WAS MORE TO THE POINT.

ON THE RADIO WAS ANOTHER
STORY ABOUT THE NED-HIPPIE
CULT UPRISING THAT WAS
SWEEPING THE WEST-COAST.

OPIMUM IS THE RELIGION OF THE MASSES

HE LIKED THAT BUT HE
KNEW IT SHOULDN'T EXIST
AND THE RESIDUAL MEMORY
WOULD SOON BE GONE.
HE WONDERED HOW THE
WORLD WAS NOW WITHOUT
EVER HAVING HAD
MARXISM.



LYALL CONRAD WAS WHAT THEY CALL A TEMPORAL ASSASSIN...



HE WAS ALSO KNOWN
AS THE CHECKMATE
MAN, FOR LESS
OBVIOUS REASONS.



...BOTH NAMES HE HATED WITH AN EXQUISITE HATE...



HE HAD BEEN IN
THE LAST GLORIOUS
DAYS OF THE MARS
SURVEY PROGRAMME
ORGANISED BY TED
KENNEDY IN THE EARLY
'80'S A NASA ELEC-
TRONIC TECHNICIAN

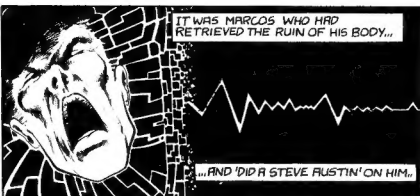
...WHILE WORKING
ON THE VIKING V...

...HE HAD FALLEN....

TWENTY SIX METRES
FIFTEEN AND A QUARTER
CENTIMETRES FROM
A ROCKET GANTRY...

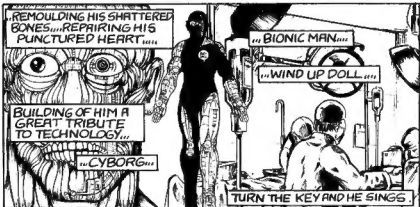
...INTO A PILE OF
TWISTED METAL...

HE RECALLED THE SKY SPINNING,
THE TRIANGLED WIRERS OF
THE GANTRY, AND PAIN LIKE
THE SHOUTING OF A FOOTBALL
CROWD WHEN THE RAMS WERE
PLAYING THE JETS ON A
HOT AFTERNOON....



IT WAS MARCOS WHO HAD
RETRIEVED THE RUIN OF HIS BODY...

...AND 'DID A STEVE AUSTIN' ON HIM...



REMOULDING HIS SHATTERED
BONES...REPAIRING HIS
PUNCTURED HEART...

...BIONIC MAN...

...WIND UP DOLL...

BUILDING OF HIM A
GREAT TRIBUTE
TO TECHNOLOGY...

...CYBORG...

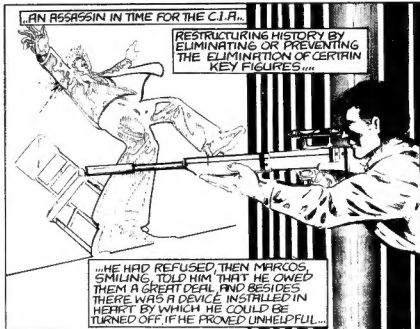
TURN THE KEY AND HE SINGS.



IT WAS THEN THAT HE HAD
BEEN INTRODUCED TO
WHAT SOMEONE WITH
AN OBVIOUS PENCHANT
FOR SCIENCE-FICTION
HAD NAMED THE
CHRONAL-DISTRIBUTOR
THE ULTIMATE
MIRACLE MACHINE
THE WELLSIAN DREAM
THAT COULD MOVE
A MAN BACKWARDS
THROUGH TIME!
THEN, THAT HE
WAS ASKED
VERY POLITELY
TO BECOME...

...AN ASSASSIN IN TIME FOR THE C.I.A...

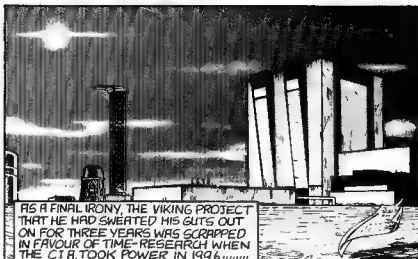
RESTRUCTURING HISTORY BY
ELIMINATING OR PREVENTING
THE ELIMINATION OF CERTAIN
KEY FIGURES...



...HE HAD REFUSED, THEN MARCOS,
SMILING, TOLD HIM THAT HE OWED
THEM A GREAT DEAL, AND BESIDES
THERE WAS A DEVICE INSTALLED IN
HEART BY WHICH HE COULD BE
TURNED OFF, IF HE PROVED UNHELPFUL...



CHECKMATE!!



AS A FINAL IRONY, THE VIKING PROJECT THAT HE HAD SWEATED HIS GUTS OUT ON FOR THREE YEARS WAS SCRAPPED IN FAVOUR OF TIME-RESEARCH WHEN THE C.I.A. TOOK POWER IN 1946.....



...SINCE THEN HE HAD ATTENDED THE PLAY 'OUR AMERICAN COUSIN' AND KILLED JOHN WILKES BOOTH....

...THIS WAS NOT AS SUCCESSFUL AS HAD BEEN HOPED HOWEVER; THE VERY NEXT DAY LINCOLN HAD SLIPPED ON HORSE DUNG AND BROKEN HIS NECK....



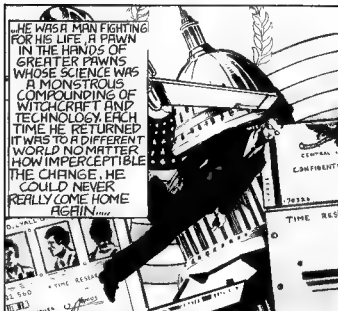
HIS EFFORTS HAD ENDED WORLD WAR II IN 1945, THIS PREVENTING FURTHER AMERICAN EXPENDITURE AND LEAVING THE FIELD FREE FOR THE U.S.A. TO DEVELOP INTO THE WORLD'S FORMOST SUPERNATION.

HE HAD KILLED MAO-TSE-TUNG....



HE HAD KILLED BOBBY KENNEDY AND MURDERED MARYLIN MONROE, HE READ NORMAN MAILER'S 'MARYLIN' AND CRIED UNTIL SHE WAS NO MORE THAN ANOTHER GLOSSY FACE, A PRE-PACKAGED MYTH....

BY KEEPING THE WATERGATE AFFAIR SECRET, HE HAD INCREASED THE POWER OF THE C.I.A. OVER THE PRESIDENT AND INSURED THEIR FUTURE DOMINATION. THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE HISTORIES HE HAD CREATED WERE NOW BEYOND HIM.....



HE WAS A MAN FIGHTING FOR HIS LIFE, A PAWN IN THE HANDS OF GREATER PAWNS WHOSE SCIENCE WAS A MONSTROUS COMPOUNDING OF WITCHCRAFT AND TECHNOLOGY. EACH TIME HE RETURNED IT WAS TO A DIFFERENT WORLD NO MATTER HOW IMPERCEPTIBLE THE CHANGE. HE COULD NEVER REALLY COME HOME AGAIN.

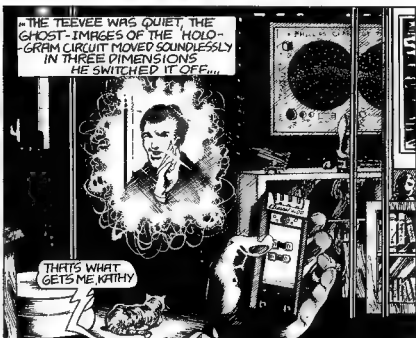


HE LOOKED AT HIS HANDS ON THE WHEEL, AT THE PLASTIC CORD OF HIS MUSCLES, THE SPUN WIRE OF HIS VEINS.

THE SKY WAS INCANDESCENT WITH THE HEAT OF THE SUN



THE LAST TEAR DRIED ON HIS FACE.



THE TEEVEE WAS QUIET, THE GHOST-IMAGES OF THE HOLOGRAM CIRCUIT MOVED SOUNDLESSLY IN THREE DIMENSIONS HE SWITCHED IT OFF.

THAT'S WHAT GETS ME KATHY



I USED TO FEEL SO BAD. NOW IT'S... IT'S LIKE EDITING A MOVIE OR SOMETHING...

SURELY THEY'RE GOING TO FINISH SOON? THEY'RE ON TOP SURELY THEY WON'T NEED YOU TO DO ANY MORE WORK FOR THEM?

SHE ALWAYS CALLED IT HIS 'WORK'



...OH CHRIST. MY HEAD'S
A CHEESE GRATER.
WHAT'S HAPPENING?

DON'T KNOW. THERE'S
DEFINITELY ANOTHER HIT
COMING UP; MARCOS
TOLD ME AS MUCH. GOD
I'D LOVE TO GET HIM AS
A BOY AND KILL HIM
SLOWLY....

CAN'T YOU COME HOME
MORE OFTEN? I MEAN, THE
KIDS HARDLY EVER SEE
YOU, AND....



...YOUR SON IS
GROWING UP WITHOUT
A FATHER. HE'LL
END UP EFFEMINATE
OR SOMETHING....



DON'T TALK
SHIT!

EFFEMINATE! THERE'S
NOTHING WRONG
WITH HIM....

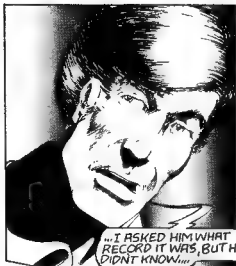


I CAN'T FIGHT, FOR
GOD'S SAKE. I CAN'T
FIGHT ANYMORE.

MARCOS TOLD ME TO
THINK OF TIME AS A
RECORD-PLAYER WITH THE
STYLUS TRACING THE
PRESENT WHILE THE
PAST AND FUTURE EXIST
SIMULTANEOUSLY....

NEAT LITTLE ANALOGY, HUH?

...BUT HE'S SO SELF-
CONSCIOUS. HE NEVER
GOES OUT AT NIGHT, OR...



...I ASKED HIM WHAT RECORD IT WAS, BUT HE DIDN'T KNOW....

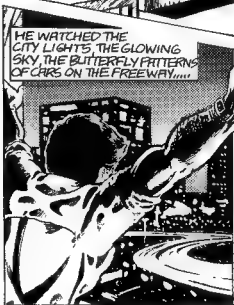
HEY, DID YOU HEAR THE ONE ABOUT THE NUNS...

HE COULD NOT SLEEP THAT NIGHT. HE PACED THE ROOM A WANE SPECTRE IN THE MOON'S LIGHT...



AT HIS BOOKSHELF HE FOUND THAT ALL THE GEORGE ORWELL BOOKS HAD GONE. THEN HE WONDERED WHY HE SHOULD THINK OF IT, AND WHO WAS GEORGE ORWELL ANYWAY? MICKEY SPILLANE WAS STILL THERE, AND HAROLD ROBBINS. SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE..

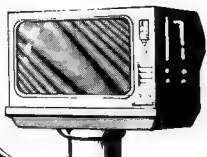
HE WATCHED THE CITY LIGHTS, THE GLOWING SKY, THE BUTTERFLY PATTERNS OF CARS ON THE FREEWAY....



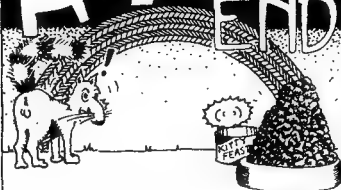
HE WOULD CATCH THE LATE SHOW MAYBE. HE SWITCHED ON THE OLD TEEVEE. THE ONE WITHOUT THE HOLOGRAM CIRCUIT....



....AND HE WOULD LOOK UP 'ANACHRONISM' IN THE DICTIONARY TOMORROW—JUST TO CHECK....



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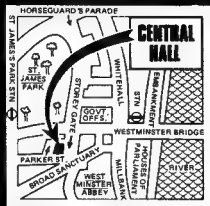
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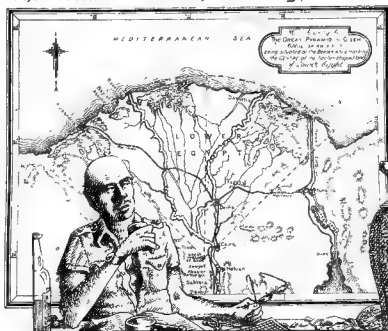
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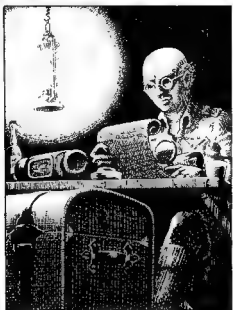
FRI 8 JAN 13 09.33 PARA 0072.87 HELIOPOLIS



Extrait du Journal de Professor J. B. Montgellier
8 Jan 1914 (Trans.)
Property of L'Académie de l'Histoire de la République
"Then, after an uneventful series of events, occurring among the ruins of the Temple of the I have made, purely by accident, what I can only describe as the Anthropological Ford of the Century..."



"Near the obelisk I have named Cleopatra's Needle - similar to the one from Luxor that has adorns the Place de la Concorde in Paris - a hidden chamber was revealed when the ground suddenly collapsed beneath one of our native boys."



MYSTERIOUS ACCIDENT TO ICONOCLAST

'Professor J. R. Montgellier, the uninspired but notorious archeologist who rose to fame last year by his discovery of the legendary Firefoot Order, was found dead yesterday morning in his pyrex home. After apparently falling down his stairs, the professor suffered a fractured skull and several other broken bones. Clutched in his left hand was an object described by experts as a Mesozoic anachronism.

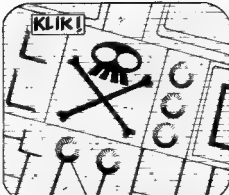
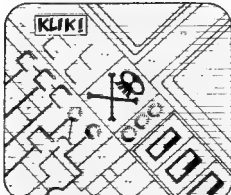
'This coincides with the recent theft of the Olex itself from the Musee National de Paris.

Police are anxious to interview two mysterious men in black who were seen talking to the professor earlier in the day.

'On a lighter note, the model of the "Iconoclast's" Headline that Professor Montgellier had shipped to France, to be presented as a gift to our Allies, the people of England. Two magnificent sphinxes are being sent in bronze to accompany the obelisk which is to be erected on the Thames Embankment in London.

Le Republicain 23 Sept '34

(Continued)



SO—HERE I WAS—STUCK SLAPPING IN THE MIDDLE OF A CONSPIRACY SO COMPLEX IT MADE THE ACTIVITIES OF THE BORGIA'S LOOK LIKE PARTY GAMES AT THE KINDERGARTEN....



WHO THE HELL WAS COUNTESS DE QUINCEY ANYWAY? NOT WHO I THOUGHT! OBVIOUSLY...WHATEVER HER GAME WAS, I WAS STICKING TO HER LIKE GLUE—SHE WAS MY TICKET OUT OF HERE....

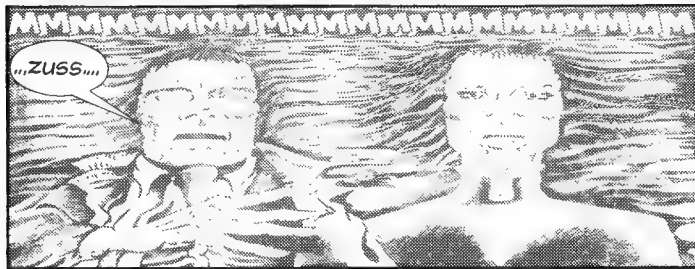


КРАКАВОООМ

— MY WORK!!— ALL MY WORK!!
YEARS OF MY LIFE— DESTROYED—
OBLITERATED—!! CURSE YOU, SLITH!!
I WILL HAVE MY VENGEANCE!!



AN INVITATION TO A MYSTERY DANCE





HOLINESS!! - AN URGENT COMMUNICATION FOR YOU FROM THE MAIN DECK...



A THOUSAND PARDONS EMINENCE - OUR AGENTS AT C.D.C.H.Q. REPORT A MASSIVE ACTIVITY BUILD UP IN THE VICINITY OF TAU-CETI!!!



HAH!! - IT CAN ONLY BE STARYVENSKI!! SET A COURSE FOR TAU-CETI!!

HE AND KANSER WILL DESTROY EACH OTHER - AND I WILL WAIT IN THE WINGS TO CLAIM THE SPOILS!!!

C D C HEADQUARTERS, ALGOL IV



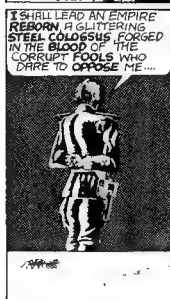
THAT DECADENT IMBECILE WILL SWALLOW THE BAIT. IN ONE MOVE THE TWO MAIN OBSTACLES TO MY BID FOR SUPREMACY WILL BE REMOVED

YOU WISH THEN FOR OUR DECOY SHIPS AROUND TAU-CETI TO ENGAGE STARYVENSKI'S FORCES IN A DIRECT CONFRONTATION



YES, YES - NOW LEAVE - MY HEAD PAINS ME...

AT ONCE COLONEL



I SHALL LEAD AN EMPIRE REBORN A GLITTERING STEEL COLOSSUS FORGED IN THE BLOOD OF THE CORRUPT FOOLS WHO DARE TO OPPOSE ME...



-AND AS FOR THOSE PATHETIC INSECTS SHADE AND DE QUINCEY- IF THEY MIDDLE IN MY AFFAIRS AGAIN...



I WILL CRUSH THEM...



LIKE THE VERMIN THAT THEY ARE!!

-AND IT WAS ONE HELL OF A RIDE!!-

-CHRIST!!
WHERE ARE WE?

THE CARGO HOLD
OF MY SHIP. -WE'RE
SAFE -FOR NOW-

I SUPPOSE YOU COULD CALL US ANARCHISTS -IF YOU HAVE TO
PUT A LABEL ON US - WE DONT BELIEVE IN GOVERNMENTS,
-OF ANY SORT - WERE FOR FREEDOM, SEBASTIAN
-NO LEADERS - AND NO CLOSED THOUGHT SYSTEMS

ALRIGHT! SO WHAT
MAKES YOU ANY BETTER
THAN STARVENS - OR
KANSER AND CO.? -
- YOU USE THE
SAME TOOLS...

NO NO, YOU'RE WRONG - BUT LOOK
WE'RE BOTH TIRED AND HUNGRY.
I'M GOING TO TAKE A SHOWER
THEN WE'LL EAT -
- AND TALK....

-NOW LOOK COUNTLESS, I THINK IT'S TIME YOU
LEVELLED WITH ME. YOU GOT ME INTO THIS MESS,
THEN YOU POP UP OUT OF NOWHERE TO PULL ME
OUT. -I'VE JUST ABOUT HAD MY FILL OF BEING
EVERYBODY'S PAWN IN THIS CRAZY GAME!!!-

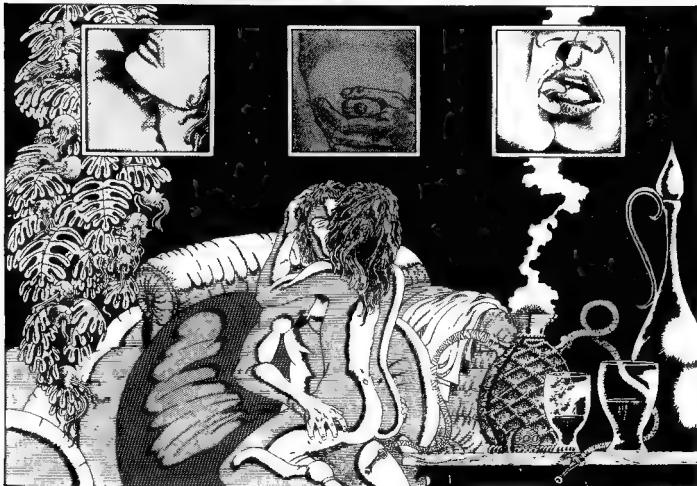
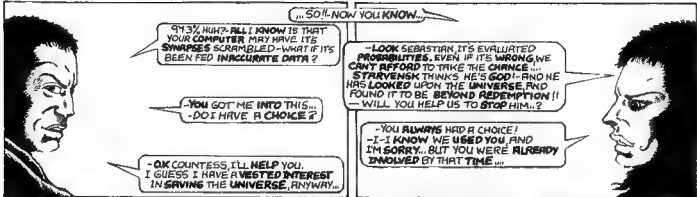
-WHO ARE YOU PEOPLE ANYWAY? YOU HAVE
ACCESS TO SOME PRETTY SOPHISTICATED
EQUIPMENT, YET YOU'RE NOT GOVERNMENT
AND YOU DONT SEEM TO BE WITH STARVENS.
YOU DONT BEHAVE LIKE ANY RACKETEER I EVER MET

-IN THE MEANTIME, WHY DONT
YOU RELAX - IF ITS INFORMATION
YOU WANT - CHECK OUT THE
COMPUTER ON THE FLIGHT
DECK - YOU SHOULD FIND
IT INTERESTING....

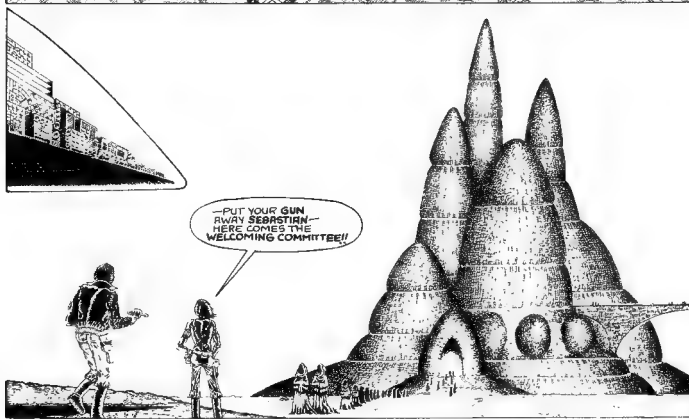
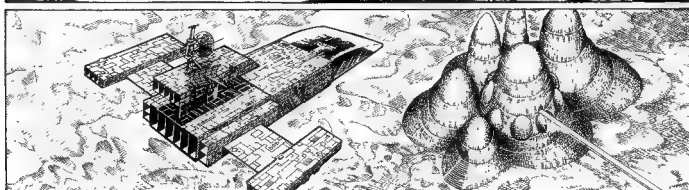
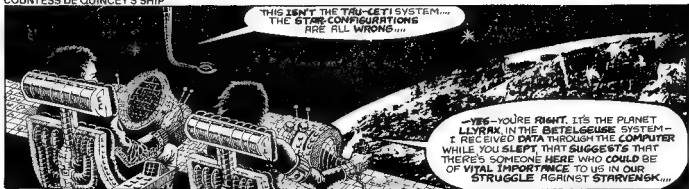
THE LADY WAS RIGHT. I WAS
KNOCKED OUT ON MY FEET, BUT,
LIKE IT OR NOT I WAS IN THIS UP
TO MY NECK - I HEADED FOR
THE FLIGHT-DECK, SHED HED BEFORE

...BUT I WAS GOING TO CHECK OUT
THOSE DATA-BANKS ANYWAY...

IF THINGS DIDNT WORK OUT - WELL
I COULD ALWAYS JUMP SHIP ON TO
THE NEAREST HABITABLE
WORLD - SURVIVING WAS A HABIT....







IN REAL LIFE, BEING A PRIVATE EYE IS GENERALLY A SORDID AND BORING WAY OF EARNING A LIVING — NOT AT ALL LIKE YOU SEE ON TELEVISION. THERE IS JUST THE OCCASIONAL INCIDENT TO MAKE IT ALL SEEM WORTHWHILE.

PRIVATE EYE

LIKE THE OTHER DAY, WHEN A MRS HARPER WALKED INTO MY OFFICE —



IT ACTUALLY STARTED TWO MONTHS AGO, ON FRIDAY 13TH APRIL. MY HUSBAND ARRIVED HOME TWO HOURS LATE, AND REFUSED TO SAY WHY, WHICH IS NOT LIKE HIM AT ALL. SINCE THEN HE HAS BEEN LATE TWO EVENINGS EVERY WEEK WITHOUT ANY EXPLANATION, AND I AM WORRIED!

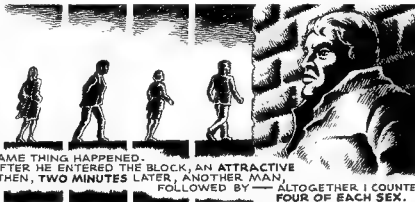
EXPECTING THIS TO BE JUST ANOTHER DREARY INFIDELITY, I BEGAN TO THINK UP EXCUSES FOR NOT TAKING THE CASE. BUT THAT DATE MEANT SOMETHING TO ME —



— AND THEN I REMEMBERED!

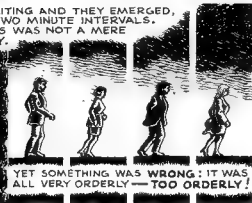


AT FIRST IT SEEMED TOO EASY. I SOON DISCOVERED THAT, TWO EVENINGS EACH WEEK, MR HARPER VISITED A BLOCK OF FLATS ACROSS TOWN. WHAT HE DID THERE WAS HIS SECRET — SO I JUST WAITED AND WATCHED.



EACH TIME THE SAME THING HAPPENED. TWO MINUTES AFTER HE ENTERED THE BLOCK, AN ATTRACTIVE LADY ARRIVED, THEN, TWO MINUTES LATER, ANOTHER MAN, FOLLOWED BY — ALTOGETHER I COUNTED FOUR OF EACH SEX.

ONE HOUR OF TEDIOUS WAITING AND THEY EMERGED, IN REVERSE ORDER, AT TWO MINUTE INTERVALS. HARPER WAS LAST. THIS WAS NOT A MERE INFIDELITY BUT AN ORGY.



YET SOMETHING WAS WRONG: IT WAS ALL VERY ORDERLY — TOO ORDERLY!

THE FLAT THEY WERE USING HAD BEEN RENTED IN THE NAME OF MR. SMITH, COMMENCING THE SAME WEEK THAT HARPER HAD CHANGED HIS WAY OF LIFE —



BETWEEN THE MEETINGS IT WAS LOCKED AND UNOCCUPIED.

I GAINED
ACCESS
WITHOUT
DIFFICULTY

THE LARGEST ROOM IN THE
FLAT HAD A TABLE, WITH
A STRANGE BURN MARK
IN THE CENTRE, AND
CURTAINS AT THE WINDOW
— BUT NOTHING ELSE.

NO CHAIRS, OR CARPET
ON THE FLOOR —

— NOT EVEN A
BED IN THE
BEDROOM OR
FREEZER IN
THE KITCHEN

THIS MUST BE A SEX ORGY OF
SPARTAN DISCOMFORT — OR
SOMETHING MORE SINISTER.

AS USUAL,
HARPER WAS THE
FIRST TO ARRIVE, LETTING
HIMSELF IN WITH A KEY. HE
TOOK A SMALL CUBE FROM HIS
POCKET AND PLACED IT ON THE TABLE
NEAR THE CENTRE OF THE BURN MARK,
THEN STOOD WAITING.

TWO MINUTES
LATER THE FIRST
LADY ARRIVED
AND REPEATED THE
PERFORMANCE.

EVENTUALLY THERE WERE SEVEN
SILENTLY WAITING FIGURES

THEN THE FINAL PARTICIPANT IN THIS
ODD CEREMONY ARRIVED —

IMMEDIATELY HER EIGHTH CUBE WAS POSITIONED,
THE LARGER CUBE IT COMPLETED, BEGAN TO GLOW.

ALTHOUGH I COULD STILL SEE THE OUTLINES OF THE
EIGHT PEOPLE, THE ROOM VANISHED AND I SEEMED
TO BE ELSEWHERE.

THE LIGHT RAPIDLY SPREAD

IS YOUR ASSESSMENT
OF THE PLANET EARTH
UNCHANGED?

YES! WE ARE STILL AGREED THAT
THIS WOULD MAKE AN EXCELLENT
OPERATIONAL BASE. — THE
INHABITANTS ARE PRIMITIVE AND
BACKWARD, AND CONSTITUTE
NO OBSTACLE WHATEVER.

**ARE YOU STILL
UNSUSPECTED?
REPORT INDIVIDUALLY**

THE FEMALE COMPANION OF THE EARTH BODY I OCCUPY IS BECOMING SUSPICIOUS. IT IS INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT FOR ME TO ACT THE PART.

I AM HAVING SIMILAR DIFFICULTIES WITH MY MALE PARTNER

MY SON IS ASKING AWKWARD QUESTIONS AND HE

HARPER WAS THE FIRST TO 'SPEAK'. THE VOICE WAS INSIDE MY HEAD, AND I REALISED THAT ANYONE OUTSIDE THE ROOM WOULD HAVE HEARD NOTHING.

I KNEW THAT I MUST DO SOMETHING. WHEN NEXT THESE ALIEN SCOUTS ASSEMBLED, IT WOULD BE TOO LATE, BUT WHAT COULD I ACCOMPLISH AGAINST SUCH ODDS?

**WAIT! I SENSE STRANGE VIBRATIONS. THERE IS SOMEONE HERE WHO IS NOT ONE OF US —
SEEK AND KILL!**

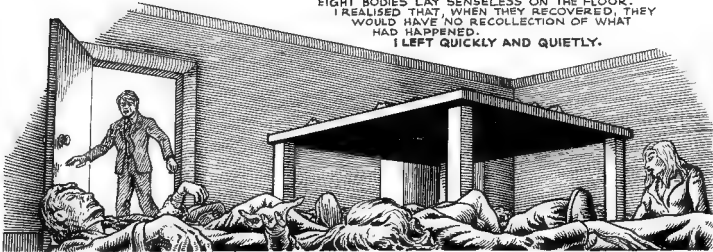
ENOUGH! ON ITS WAY. THE INVASION FLEET IS ALREADY AGAIN UNTIL YOU WILL NOT BE NEEDED BEACON. I CAN INFORM YOU SET UP THE HOMING IDENTITY CUBES WHILE TRY TO ACT AS NORMAL AS POSSIBLE.

IN DESPERATION I SEIZED A LOOSE PIECE OF WOOD LYING INSIDE THE CUPBOARD AND BURST INTO THE ROOM

WHILE THE ALIEN ENTITIES HESITATED, STARTLED AND DISORGANISED, I RAN BETWEEN THEM AND BROUGHT THE TIMBER DOWN, VICIOUSLY, ON THE GLOWING CUBES.

A SOUNDLESS SCREAM TWISTED THROUGH MY BRAIN, BUT I DID NOT STOP UNTIL EVERY CUBE WAS SMASHED.

EIGHT BODIES LAY SENSELESS ON THE FLOOR.
I REALISED THAT, WHEN THEY RECOVERED, THEY
WOULD HAVE NO RECOLLECTION OF WHAT
HAD HAPPENED.
I LEFT QUICKLY AND QUIETLY.



I NEVER DID REPORT BACK TO MRS.
HARPER. THE ONLY EXPLANATION
I COULD GIVE WOULD NEVER BE
BELIEVED. BUT I HAD A DUTY TO
REPORT TO SOMEONE —



— WITHOUT A HOMING BEACON
THE INVADERS WILL FIND IT
DIFFICULT TO LOCATE THIS
PLANET. WHILE THEY ARE STILL
SEARCHING, THEY MUST BE
INTERCEPTED AND DESTROYED!



YOUR RECOMMENDATION WILL
BE ACTED UPON AND FULL
CREDIT GIVEN. YOU HAVE
DONE WELL.



I WAS PLEASED. EARTH HAD BEEN SO
QUIET IN THE TWO HUNDRED YEARS
SINCE I FIRST ARRIVED, THAT THE
GALACTIC PEACE FEDERATION HAD
BEEN SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING WITH-
DRAWING ME. THIS WOULD ENSURE
MY PRESENCE HERE FOR FOR AT
LEAST A FURTHER FIFTY YEARS.

THEY MAY BE
PRIMITIVE AND
BACKWARD, BUT I
HAVE BECOME RATHER
FOND OF THE INHAB-
ITANTS OF THIS LITTLE
PLANET —



MAIL ORDER



STAR REACH GREATEST HITS
Star Reach Productions 64 pages £4.20

A collection of the best from Star Reach magazine from 1974 to 1979. Included are two versions of Elric of Melniboné, one in full colour by Frank Brunner, the other in black and white from the Two Man Horse team of Eric Kumball and Bob Gould. The highly acclaimed Cody Starback is also here, and so are Star Reach stalwarts Mike Voburg (with Steve Englehart), Lee Marrs and Michael T. Gilbert.



FLIGHTS OF ICARUS Paper Tiger
162 pages £5.95

Flights of fantastic imagination, from behemoths of the Pre-historic to Aliens and their vistas, a plethora of starships, beasts from fantasy and other fantasies, from the likes of Smith, Wrighton, Foss, Woodroffe, Dean, Peter Elson, Angus Mackie and many others. A panorama of superlative imaginative paintings, from the best illustrators working in the field today. A must for comic fans and book cover buffs alike.

MICHAEL ENGLISH 3D EYE
Paper Tiger 114 pages £4.95

While Mouse and Kelley were working in psychedelic designs in America, Michael English was establishing the look of underground graphics in this country. Again, Mucha and Art Nouveau were the starting points in defining the central style of psychedelia. This volume contains many of these early poster designs, with their blend of mysticism, symbolism and eroticism. Some pages from his never completed 'Amen comic' are reproduced as well as his food paintings of desserts, hamburgers and fried eggs, Coke bottle tops, Marmite jars and squashed toothpaste tubes, to his paintings of nature with the Abandoned Human Artifact, sections of London bus, locomotive and 'Shoe Strikes Water'.



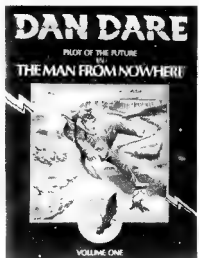
PLANET STORY 122 pages
Harry Harrison and Jim Burns £5.50
Pierrot Publishing

The long awaited collaboration of one of SF's best authors and one of SF's best illustrators. Exquisite full colour double page paintings enhance a wildly humorous tale of space pioneers forging a railroad across the planet Strabismus.



COMMANCHE MOON Jack Jackson
Rip-off Press 112 pages £4

Cynthia Ann Parker was carried off by Comanches in a raid in Texas. She was brought up as an Indian, and became Nadvah, the White Comanche. Her son, Quanah, was, ironically, to lead the Comanches in their final struggle against the whites, his mother's own people. Jackson gives us a telling insight into the Indian view of life and thinking. An important comic novel, a tapestry of excellent black and white art.



DAN DARE
THE MAN FROM NOWHERE
Dragon's Dream £4.25

The Eagle's far-famed Pilot of the Future, Dan Dare returns in full colour action in the tale of stiff upper lip and derring-do beyond the Solar System. Can Dan save the planet Cryptos from the onslaught of the evil Phants? This exquisite volume reprints the first half of the 'Man from Nowhere' serial. Frank Hampson's art still surpasses anything in Britain's overground comics to date.

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NEVERWHERE

Ariel Books

114 pages

Corben

£4.50

First serialised in Heavy Metal and Metal Hurlant, originally an award winning animation short, Neverwhere is a landmark in the outstanding career of this brilliant artist. It took Corben five years to paint this masterpiece, the epic tale of a man transported into another world, and into another body, and his struggle to wrest the all too powerful Lochnar from all too greedy evil hands. The Foreword is by Fritz Leiber.



THE ODD WORLD

OF RICHARD CORBEN

by Guess Who?
Warren

82 pages
£2.60

For the connoisseur of Corben, this volume ranges from Corben's work between 1971 and 1977. This book includes such classics as "How Howie Made It In The Real World" and "Cidopey". Half the strips are in colour, the other half, therefore, are not.

The Odd (comic World of



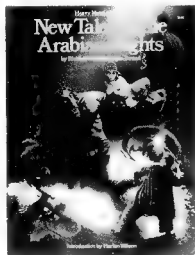
BLOODSTAR

Richard Corben

£5.40

This highly acclaimed adaptation of 'The Valley of the Worm' by Robert E. Howard by Corben, assisted by John Jakes, is soon to be available in soft cover format.

Powerful, provocative illustrations by Corben at his very best. A graphic novel of epic scope and content - Not to be missed under any circumstances.



NEW TALES OF

THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

Corben and Jan Strnad
Heavy Metal Books

108 pages
£4.80

Another full colour extravaganza by Corben, this time in collaboration with that fine writer Jan Strnad. This world of Sinbad, Arabian fantasy, jinnies, demons, deserts, califs et al. is evocatively portrayed with the usual Corben relish. A rich tapestry of tone and colour and sculpted figures, each panel is almost three dimensional, with its cinematic lighting moods and layouts.

THE COMIC ART OF RICHARD CORBEN

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HURRY...

SONG OF THE SLEEPERS

BY *Thina*

letters
by ORZ

THE SUN
WILL BE
RISING ANY
MINUTE
NOW.



DO WE HAVE
EVERYTHING?

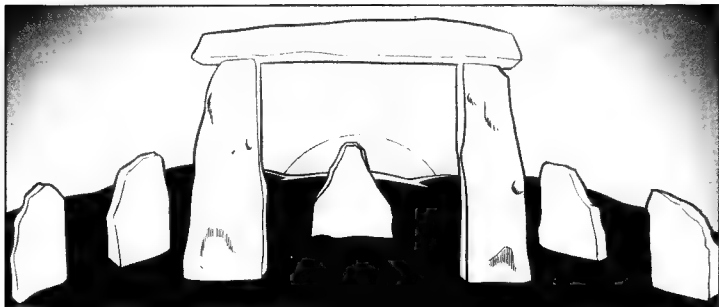
THE AMULETS?

THE
SOLAR
DISCS?

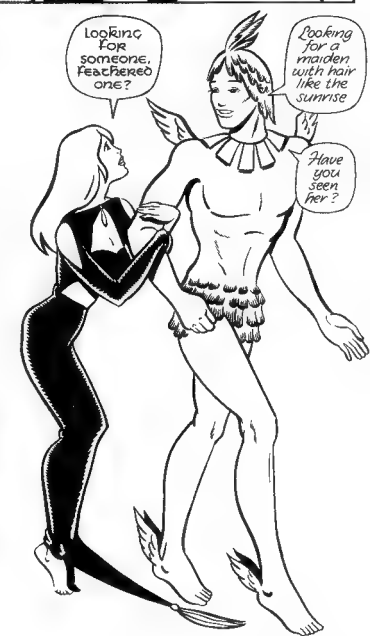


THE OPIUM
POPPY SEEDS?













charming
one year like
a minute.



hey,
olwen!!



what's
up,
gwyn?

we've
got to
get back,
quick!



i only
hope
we're
not too
late...



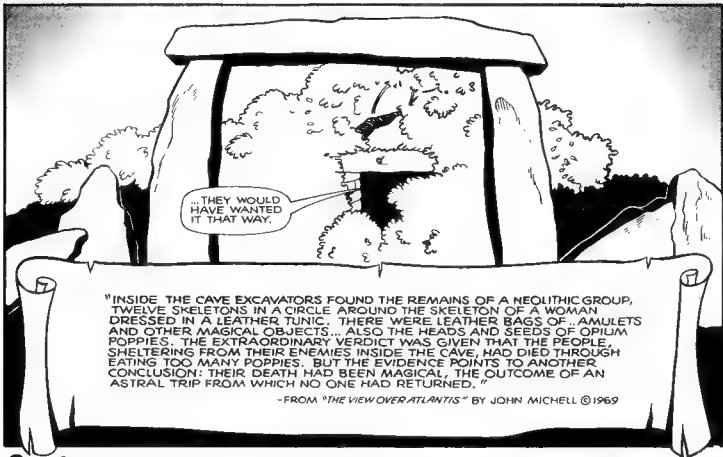
2,000 YEARS LATER

THIS IS A MAJOR DISCOVERY, DR. WHITE! HOW DID YOU KNOW WE'D FIND THE SKELETONS IN THE BARROW?

TRADE SECRET.

BUT LET'S GET BUSY. THESE BONES WILL BE DISPLAYED IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM IN A PROPER BRONZE-AGE BURIAL.

LYING ON THEIR SIDES, SURROUNDED BY THE BEST POTTERY AND SPEARS IN THE MUSEUM.





No 1 Arkwright, Tales from the Edge, Kramer, Radio Comix, Star Run Saga.



No 2 Arkwright, Tales from the Edge, Kramer, Radio Comix, Star Run Saga, Magor the Mage.



No 3 Arkwright, Tales from the Edge, Radio Comix, Star Run Saga.



No 4 Arkwright, Tales from the Edge, Thran & G deon, Stargrave Magor the Mage, Elder Gods, Hean

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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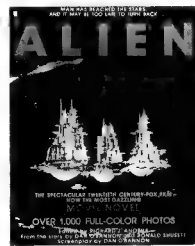
MOUSE AND KELLEY Paper Tiger
130 pages £4.95

Perhaps best known for their Grateful Dead cover designs, Mouse and Kelley first collaborated in the mid-Sixties on dance posters in San Francisco, and this volume contains a record of their work ranging from the Beatles and the Trans-Siberian Orchestra through to their album covers, tour posters for the likes of the Rolling Stones, Journey and Led Zeppelin, and their T-shirts. Their work as separate artists is also well documented. Includes Mouse's 'Monster Munch-in' and his poster for Van Morrison, John Mayall and Cream gigs, and Kelley's memorable collages as well as some examples of his work with Rick Griffin.

ALIEN MOVIE NOVEL Futura
212 pages £3.95

Lavishly produced large format photo novel of the spectacular Twentieth Century Fox film 'Alien'. The chest buster scene is here

in all its crimson glory, and it's yours to stare at for as long as you can! Over 1000 high quality full colour stills tell this gripping and gruesome tale, and lose none of the cinematic effect of the movie. Quite simply, the best photo novel yet produced.



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AFFAIR OF HONOUR?

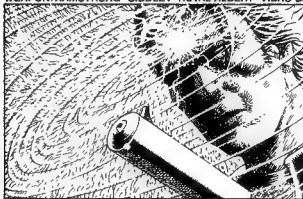


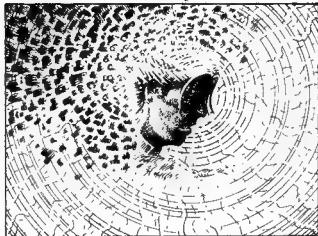
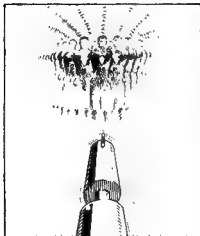
HYDE PARK, LONDON PARA 00.39.21

SUN 30 MAR 75 07.00



WEAPON: ARMSTRONG-SIDDLEY 'ROYAL ALBERT' VIBRO BEAMER





THIS WAS A GOOD CHANCE. DYING, THE AGENT WOULD PERHAPS DIVULGE INFORMATION THAT NO AMOUNT OF MIND PROBING COULD PERCEIVE... INFORMATION USUALLY KEPT LOCKED BEHIND MENTAL SHIELDS ARTIFICIALLY CREATED BY DISRUPTOR MACHINES. ARKWRIGHT TRIED A THOUGHT IMPLANT...



...ALL IT NEEDED WAS A PUSH...

HE TOOK THE BAIT...



LISTEN...
I'LL REPAY THEM...
3 KOFF:
FIREFROST...
00-72-87 3 KOFF:
THE OPAL PYRAMID
OF CHEOPS...
THEY'RE MOVING
IN TOMORROW.
3 KOFF: KOFF:



...AND MY SECONDS.
THERE NOT REALLY
WEST MOLUCCAN SEPERATISTS
-THEY'RE DISRUPTOR AGENTS
TOO

I KNOW



VICKERS SONIC AUTOMATIC



3 KOFF:
- KOFF:



DISPATCH FROM ARKWRIGHT: BLUE
CONDITION - REPEAT - BLUE
CONDITION - FIREFROST LOCATED
CONTINUUM 00/72/87 - CONTACT
AGENT OCTOBRIANA. ASSIGNATION
- CAIRO - TWELVE HOURS. ENDS

To be Continued...

LARGE COW Comix



HUNT EMMERSON # 250

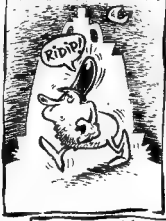
A VILLAGE CRICKET MATCH IS TAKING PLACE



THOK! A SIX!



FOR WALLACE WEED, THIS WAS TO BE THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF REMARKABLE EVENTS!



HE BEGAN TO NOTICE STRANGE LIGHTS IN THE SKY TO THE EAST...



...A PAINTING HE OWNED BEGAN TO BLEED...



HE WOKE ONE NIGHT TO FIND HIS BED FULL OF FISH!



AND HE WAS VISITED BY A MYSTERIOUS STRANGER IN BLACK, WHO SAID...



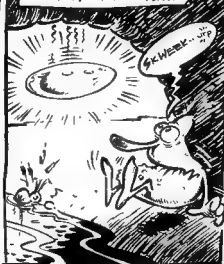
WALLACE HAD NO INTENTION OF TELLING ANYONE! HE HARDLY BELIEVED HIS OWN SENSES!!



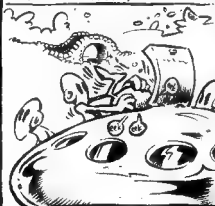
THE CLIMAX OF THESE WIERD AND WORRYING EVENTS CAME SEVERAL DAYS LATER, HE HAD BEEN INDULGING IN A SPOT OF SQUEAKING UNDER THE BRIDGE.....



...WHEN SUDDENLY!...



THE TERRIFIED MR. WEED IS UN CEREMONIOUSLY BUNDLED INTO THE STRANGE CRAFT...



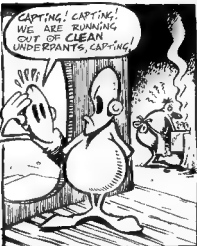
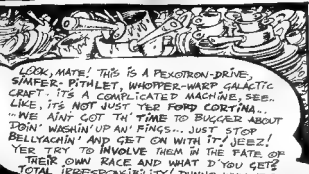
...WHERE HE IS FLUNG, BEFORE THE LEADER OF THE ALIEN BEINGS!



YOU SHOULD BE HONOURED! GO ON! BE HONOURED!



BLIMEY! DON'T YOU LOT DO ANY WASHING UP?



OK, MR. MATE! TAKE THE NECESSARY STEPS!



IT IS DONE MY CAPTIN'!



AND, IN A VILLAGE CHURCH, THE VERGER NOTICES A MIRACULOUS FACE IN PATCHES OF MOULD ON A WALL...



IN THE FACE OF SUCH INCONTROVERTIBLE EVIDENCE, ARE WE NOT FORCED TO SHRIEK RHETORICALLY - "WAS GOD AN INTERGALACTIC DOMESTIC EMPLOYMENT AGENCY???"
Stand aside, Science!

THE ELDER GODS.

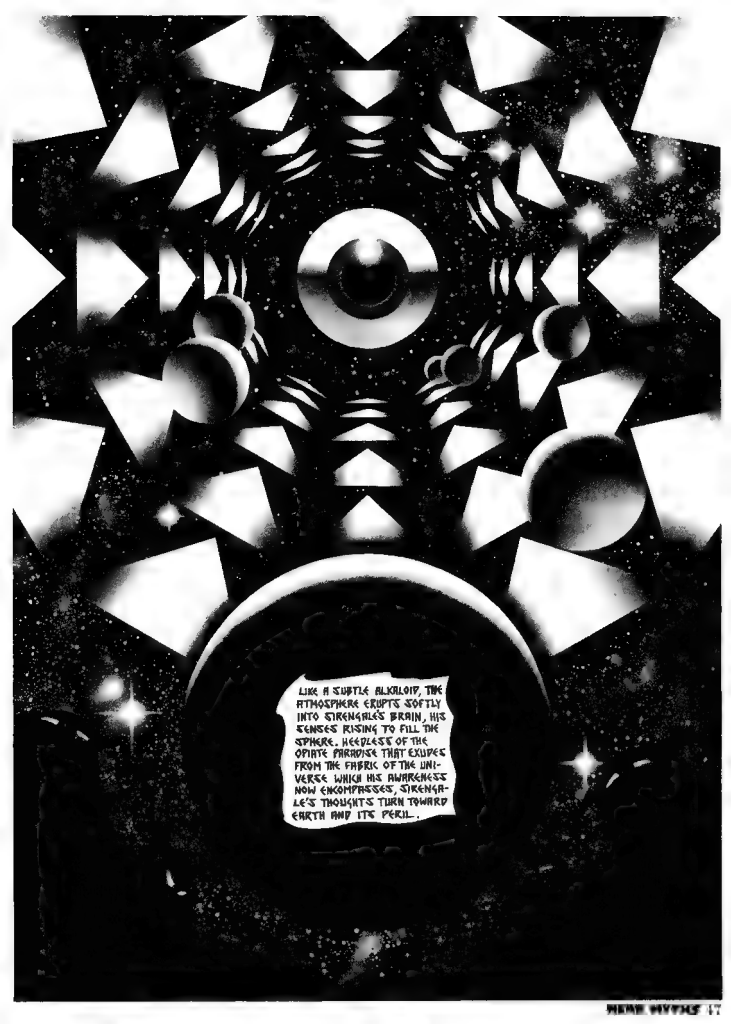
PART II.



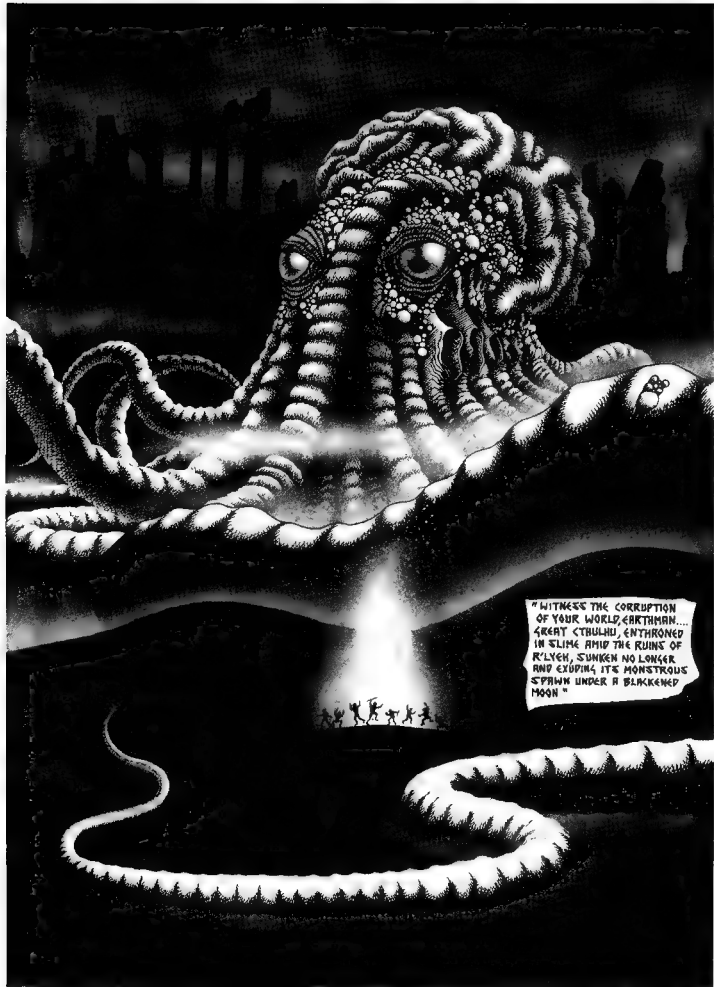
"A HUNDRED MILLION YEARS HAVE ELAPSED SINCE WORSHIP OF THE ELDER GODS CEASED ON EARTH. ITS FATE IS THEREFORE OF NO CONCERN. HOWEVER, THE MICROBE'S AUDACITY IS DIVERTING! WHAT SACRIFICE WOULD YOU RENDER, HUMANID, WERE THIS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED?" YOUR SOUL PERHAPS?"

THE SHIP UNFOLDS UNDER THE POTENT GAZE OF THE ELDER GODS, EXPOSING ITS MASTER TO THE ELECTRIFYING WINDS OF UNKNOWN KROPATH, UPON WHOSE HIGH PEAKS THE GODS JOIN IN ECSTATIC DANCE IN THEIR PALACES OF ONYX.





LIKE A SUBTLE ALKALOID, THE
ATMOSPHERE ERUPTS SOFTLY
INTO SIRENGALE'S BRAIN, HIS
SENSES RISING TO FILL THE
SPHERE. HEADLESS OF THE
OPIATE PARADISE THAT EXUDES
FROM THE FABRIC OF THE UNI-
VERSE WHICH HIS AWARENESS
NOW ENCOMPASSES, SIRENGA-
LE'S THOUGHTS TURN TOWARD
EARTH AND ITS PERIL.



"WITNESS THE CORRUPTION
OF YOUR WORLD, EARTHMAN...
GREAT CTHULHU, ENTHRONED
IN SLIME AMID THE RUINS OF
R'LYEH, SUNKEN NO LONGER
AND EXUDING ITS MONSTROUS
SPAWN UNDER A BLACKENED
MOON "



"KNOW ALSO THAT, BY THE
STRENGTH OF YOUR PURPOSE,
YOU HAVE DEFIED THE
SEDUCTIONS WAKA TEMPT
EVERY MORTAL THAT BRE-
ATHES THE AIR OF OUR
PLANET REFUGE. THUS
OUR POWER DOES NOT
EXCEED YOUR OWN. REALI-
SE THAT SUCH VERMIN AS
NOW OVER-RUN YOUR
WORLD....

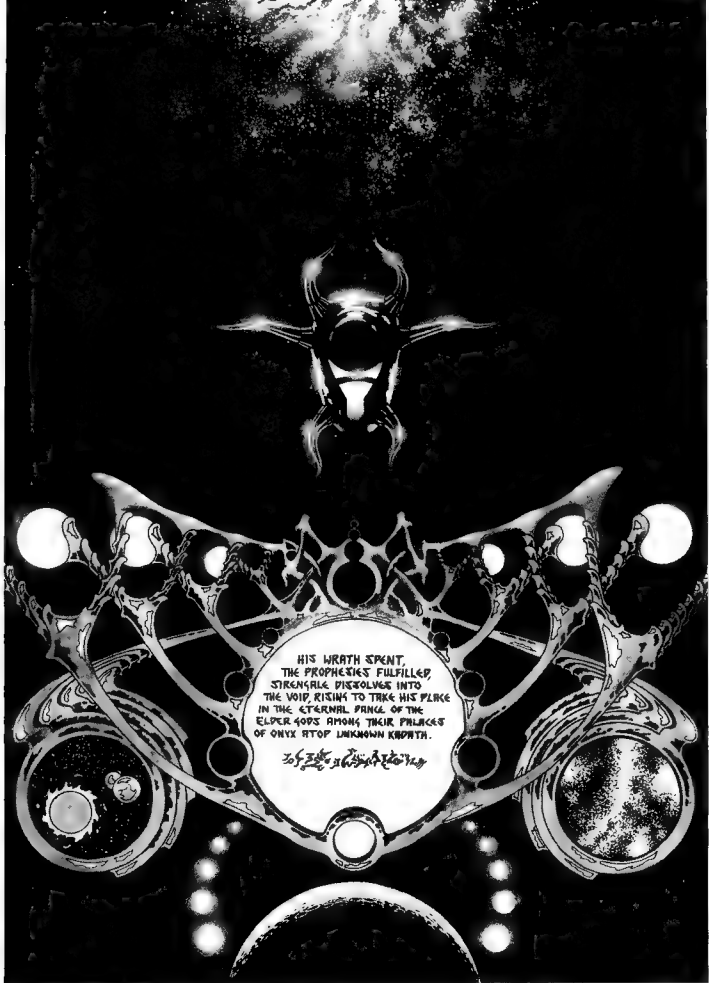
.... ARE WITHIN YOUR
POWER TO ERADICATE.
SIRENALS EXTENDS
HIS NEW POWER. TRAN-
SCENDING INFINITE
GULFS WITH THE CREE
OF THOUGHT, HE HOVERS
MOMENTARILY ABOVE
THE STRICKEN EARTH.....

....MUSTERING HIS WRATH FOR
THE FINAL PURSE.



THE LORTHOME BULK OF CTHULHU
DISSIPATED, HIS WORSHIPPERS
AND ACOLYTES CRUSHED AND SCA-
TTERED, SIRENGALE TURNS HIS
MIGHT TO THE DESTRUCTION OF
R'LYEH. AGES BEFORE MAN WERE
THE CYCLOPEAN COLUMNS AND BUT-
RESSES REARED ABOVE THE
PRIMEVAL SEA-BED, SO RECENTLY
UPLIFTED FROM THE OCEAN BY
THE FOLLOWERS OF CTHULHU AND
THEIR VILE RITUALS, THE EVIL CITY
FACES ITS ULTIMATE ANNIHILATION
BY THE OUTRAGED ELEMENTS THAT
SIRENGALE NOW COMMANDS.





HIS WRATH SPENT,
THE PROPHECIES FULFILLED,
SIRENGALE DISSOLVES INTO
THE VOID, RISING TO TAKE HIS PLACE
IN THE ETERNAL PANGE OF THE
ELDER GODS AMONG THEIR PALACES
OF ONYX ATOP UNKNOWN KADATH.

2013.10.10.10.10.10



AND SO THE SPIRIT OF DJIROAN STRENGTH
PASSED BEYOND THE SPAN OF HUMAN
COMPREHENSION, AND PEACE RETURNED
TO THE ANCIENT EARTH. AS THE EMISSION
FROM THE SUPERNOVAE CASCADED THROUGH
THE IONOSPHERE THE AURORAE FLASHED
FROM POLE TO POLE ABOVE THE BIOLUMINESCENT
CITIES, ONCE MORE CASTING THEIR SPORES
ACROSS THE RAVAGED CONTINENTS

IN THE LAST DAYS OF THE GALAXY,
NEVER AGAIN WOULD THE BLIGHT OF THE
GREAT OLD ONES SPREAD ITS DEFILE-
MENT ACROSS THE EARTH NOR ANY-
THING DISTURB THE SLUMBER OF
THE CITIES AND THEIR DREAMING
HUMAN SYMBIONTS.

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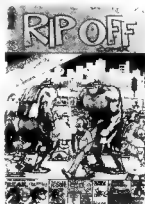
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THE CITY OF
TOWERS

THIRANIA

Tales of
SAVAGE
FANTASY
C

CHAPTER 1

KEREZ IS A YOUNG SKY-RANGER...
RETURNING TO HIS DISTANT
HOMELAND... AFTER YEARS
OF DISCIPLINED TRAINING, WITH THE
NOBLE SKY-LORDS OF ZANTHRA!



RISKING A FLIGHT THRU THE 'BADLANDS'
KEREZ WAS ATTACKED BY A LARGE
PACK OF GARGILS! THE BAT-WINGED
PREDATORS OF THIRANIA ...!

AFTER A FIERCE AND BLOODY
BATTLE... KEREZ, WITH SOME
TIMELY ASSISTANCE FROM HIS
LOYAL SKARTH-DRAGON - WON THRU
TO CONTINUE, HIS HOMEWARD FLIGHT



A FLEETING, WINGED SHADOW,
THE RHYTHMIC BEAT
OF REPTILIAN WINGS.

FAR AHEAD A STRANGELY SHAPED
FORTRESS PIERCES THE SKY-LINE!



KEREZ MARVELLED AT
THE SHEER CLIFFS
WHICH FORMED THE
WALLS OF THIS
MASSIVE FORTRESS.
... HE WONDERED AT
THE SUPREME ARTISTRY
AND SKILL OF THE
CREATOR'S OF THIS
FANTASTIC CITY!



THE MYSTERIOUS INHABITANTS
SEEMED LIKE TINY INSECTS
SET AGAINST THE IMMENSITY
OF THE STRUCTURE,
ON SIGHTING
KEREZ THEY
IMMEDIATELY
BECKONED
HIM TO LAND!



KEREZ IS GREETED UPON LANDING BY A SMALL WELCOME-ING PARTY OF THESE STARTLING CREATURES.

SKAR!!
DON'T HARM THEM!!

AFTER DISCIPLINING SKAR... KEREZ DISMOUNTS AND STRIDES TOWARDS HIS NEW FOUND

ALLIES!

WELCOME STRANGER ALL ARE FRIENDS WHO OPPOSE THE GARGILS!!

COME! ZARKOS OUR RULER WISHES TO TALK WITH YOU!!

I WELCOME YOUR HOSPITALITY... BUT YOUR RACE, IT IS UNKNOWN TO ME.

... AND HOW DID YOU LEARN OF MY FIGHT WITH THE GARGILS?

KEREZ FOLLOWS HIS HOSTS ALONG WINDING WALKWAYS. HIS CURIOSITY PROMPTS MANY QUESTIONS, MOST OF WHICH REMAINED... UNANSWERED!!

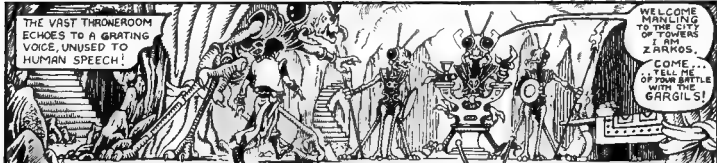
WE ARE ZARKS... ONE OF OUR HUNTING PARTIES SAW A PACK OF GARGILS ATTACKING YOU - ALAS, WE COULD NOT COME TO YOUR AID! WE ARE PLEASED THAT YOU SURVIVED.

YES, A LUCKY ESCAPE THANKS TO SKAR!



KEREZ, UNAWARE AS YET OF SKAR'S CAPTURE, IS LED DEEPER INTO THE DARK AND MYSTERIOUS DEPTHS OF THE CITY OF TOWERS...





THE VAST THRONEROOM
ECHOES TO A GRATING
VOICE, UNUSED TO
HUMAN SPEECH!

WELCOME
MELLING TO
THE CITY
OF TOWERS
I AM
ZARKOS.

COME...
TELL ME
OF YOUR BATTLE
WITH THE
GARGILS!

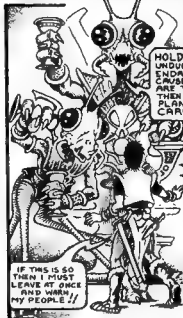


MY JOURNEY WAS A
PEACEFUL ONE.
I SOUGHT NO CONFLICT,
YET THEY SWOOPED
ON ME FROM OUT OF
THE SKY FOR NO
REASON!

WHY?
WHAT HAS
TURNED THEM
INTO SUCH SAVAGE
AGGRESSORS?



...IT IS OUR
BELIEF THAT
THEY ARE IN THRAL
TO SOME EVIL BEING
OF GREAT POWER...
THAT THIS BEING
SEEKS TO UNITE
THEM TO CONQUER
AND ENSLAVE
ALL OF...
THIRANIA!



HOLD MANLING
UNDOE HASTE MY
UNDANGER OUR
CAUSE... IF WE
ARE TO BE ALLIES
THEN WE MUST
PLAN MOST
CAREFULLY...

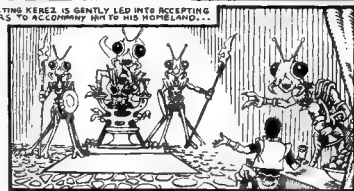
IF THIS IS SO
THEN I MUST
LEAVE AT ONCE
AND WARN
MY PEOPLE!!



COME!
TAKE WINE
WITH US...



SO WINE IS SUPPED, AND PLANS ARE LAID, AND TRUSTING KEREZ IS GENTLY LED INTO ACCEPTING
THE OFFER OF AN ESCORT OF ZARK WARRIORS TO ACCOMPANY HIM TO HIS HOMELAND...



THEN THROUGH THE NUMBING
HAZE OF ALCOHOL...

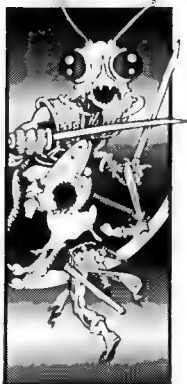
CAME THE CLATTER OF RUNNING FEET,
A VOICE RAISED IN AN URGENT CRY!!

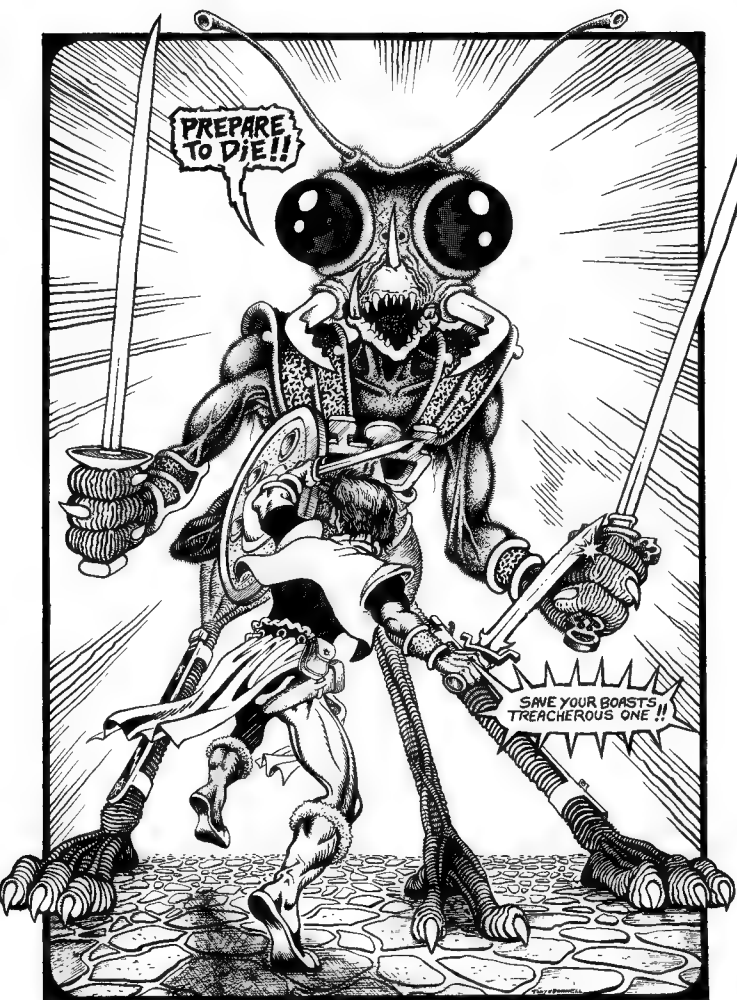


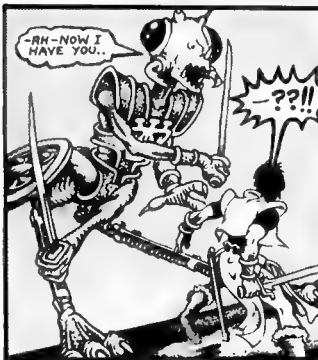
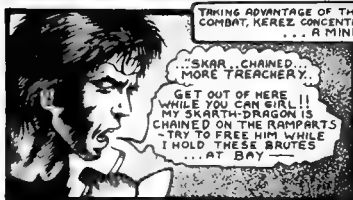
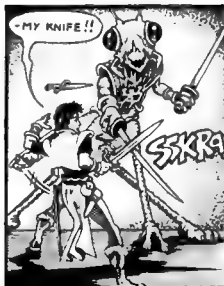
STRANGER!! DON'T
TRUST THEM--THEY
SEEK TO USE YOU!!

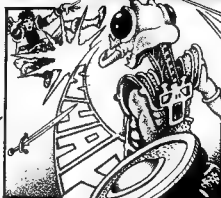
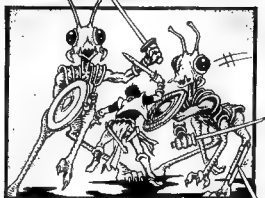
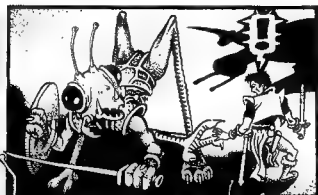


...AND WITH IT,
A DAWNING AWARENESS...









- HAH!! WHERE'S
YOUR WOULD-BE
SAVIOUR NOW, FEMALE?

PERHAPS, WITH
THE AID OF YOUR
SWORD, MONSTER...

I CAN



..EVEN THE
ODDS..



A LITTLE.



..THAT THESE BEASTS
DIE MORE EASILY
THAN THEIR
APPEARANCE
SUGGESTS..

THERE'LL BE PLENTY OF
TIME FOR TALK LATER
GIRL....



..THEN FOLLOW
ME....

..IF WE EVER GET
OUT OF HERE
ALIVE...





22.38

ONCE AWAKE, THE EMPATHIC LINK-UP IS INSTANTANEOUS ENERGY PASSING ALONG PSYCHIC WAVELENGTHS FLOWS INTO ROSE WYLD'S MIND FROM HER ALTERNATIVE SELF ON PARALLEL 00-72-87.



DECODED BY THE COMPLEX CHEMICAL AND BIOELECTRICAL MECHANISMS OF THE BRAIN, THE INFORMATION EXCHANGE IS COMPLETE.



GOOD EVENING KARL THIS IS PETER JACOBSON OF THE DEFENCE COMMITTEE

POSSIBILITIES ? WE'RE DEALING IN PROBABILITIES HERE - IF NOT CERTAINITIES

YOU'VE READ MY REPORT ?

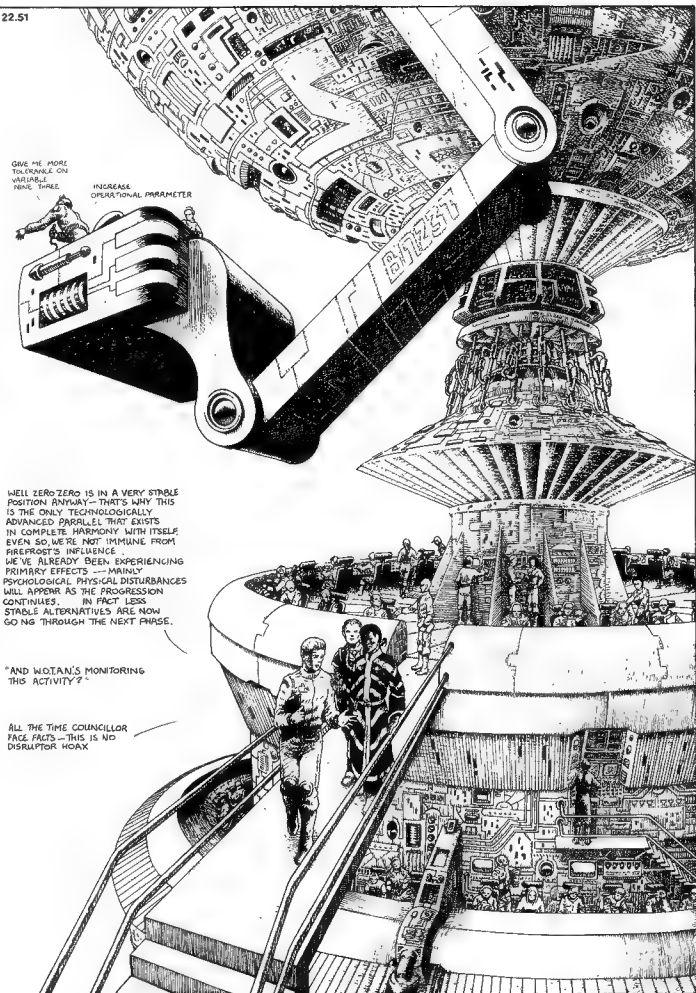
YES AND I'VE SEEN THE STATISTICS THESE... ER... 'ABERRATIONS IN NORMAL REALITY'.. HOW WILL THEY AFFECT OUR CONTINUUM ?

COUNCILLOR KIELTY AND I - INDEED MOST OF US DOWN AT K-DIVISION ARE ALARMED AT THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE FIREFROST SITUATION



GAVE ME MORE
TOLERANCE ON
VARIABLE
NINE THREE

INCREASE
OPERATIONAL PARAMETER



WELL ZERO ZERO IS IN A VERY STABLE
POSITION ANYWAY—THAT'S WHY THIS
IS THE ONLY TECHNOLOGICALLY
ADVANCED PARALLEL THAT EXISTS
IN COMPLETE HARMONY WITH ITSELF.
EVEN SO, WE'RE NOT IMMUNE FROM
FIREPROST'S INFLUENCE.
WE'VE ALREADY BEEN EXPERIENCING
PRIMARY EFFECTS — MAINLY
PSYCHOLOGICAL PHYSICAL DISTURBANCES
WILL APPEAR AS THE PROGRESSION
CONTINUES. IN FACT LESS
STABLE ALTERNATIVES ARE NOW
GOING THROUGH THE NEXT PHASE.

"AND WOTAN'S MONITORING
THIS ACTIVITY?"

ALL THE TIME COUNCILLOR
FACE FACTS—THIS IS NO
DISRUPTOR HOAX



To be Continued...



I
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~Clay~